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periods lacks the proper completeness and accuracy. As an example, which we could replace by even more inadequate ones, Fitz-Roy (a):182 will suffice. He writes about how a bride is obtained: "As soon as a youth is able to maintain a wife, by his exertion in fishing or bird-catching, he obtains the consent of her relations, and does some piece of work for her parents. Having built or stolen a canoe for himself, he watches for an opportunity, and carries off his bride. If she is unwilling, she hides herself in the woods until her admirer is heartily tired of looking for her, and gives up the pursuit; but this seldom happens" /cited in English/. Now one should compare this with the following lines on how a marriage actually takes place.

● 124 I, too, began my observations at a time when original conditions were already showing changes here and there as a result of the devastating influence of European civilization. Hence my research could not rest solely on direct observation, but was largely dependent on questions and inquiries. Fortunately, at that time I met several older men and women who still vividly recalled all the laws and customs upon which marriage and family life were built in former times. They themselves had strictly resisted almost all the activity of the missionaries and the influence of European civilization. Even though these conditions of research were less favorable, they at least helped me to grasp clearly those principles of the marriage institution and the course of family life that in former times were exclusively valid.

114 If we contrast with this the judgments and assertions of travelers of former times, we see with frightening clarity how little truth they often contain and how boldly and unscrupulously they were circulated. They not only burdened my research work, but it sometimes also became a highly ungrateful task. /630/ It is a satisfaction to me, however, that the final result, as it is contained in the following pages, has been set forth in detail and without error.

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584 are also established customs which apply to the actual marriage proposal and which set up certain limits as genuine barriers to marriage. A marriage among the Yamana never takes place without form and without rules, although in principle there is unlimited freedom in the choice of partners.

•124 Our natives would like Europeans to know how much they value the responsible decision to enter the marriage union as an event, because it is significant for the tribal community. For this reason it is made known at least to the nearest fellow-tribesmen. On my third journey, the people wanted to show us the procedure of a wedding ceremony, but unfortunately the marriage plans of two young natives who had been fond of each other for a time finally fell through. I do not know of any European, missionaries possibly excepted, who personally witnessed the modest ceremony of a proposal /631/ and a wedding. Nevertheless, many presumptuous travelers gave their opinion of it. It is not worthwhile here to mention individual unreliable opinions. It is more important and, for several reasons, of special significance to describe here in detail existing customs of courtship and marriage.

1. The Marriageable Age

582 881 It never occurs to a Fuegian to count a person's age in years. Hence, they never set a definite age after which young people may marry. They presuppose, as an absolute condition, participation in the youth initiation, less because a certain age is thereby assumed, but rather because in that lengthy preparation the young man is trained in obtaining food and instructed in his behavior toward others, that is to say, he is educated to become a good and useful human being. First he must prove, as it were, his ability to lead an ordered, independent life and to work successfully economically before society agrees to his marriage. Most chaps were probably not spared attendance even a second time as actual candidates at the youth initiation, for only in this way did they obtain the right to take part in the men's ceremony. There was no similar condition connected with a second entrance

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861 rearing in an unexpectedly favorable light and which reveal our much misunderstood Yamana as sensitive experts in all matters pertaining to a child. An opportunity to appreciate their mastery of child-rearing skills is provided by clear insight concerning the youth initiation ceremony which I was twice /694/ privileged to experience and which I shall describe in detail below. In the principles for the treatment of the maturing generation, a good deal of unadulterated practical philosophy and sound child-rearing wisdom from the remote past has been preserved to this day among the much misunderstood primitive people of frosty Tierra del Fuego.

a. The Infant and Its Care

• 124 The sensitivity of the people and delicate consideration for the mother impel them to conceal as far as possible from the eyes of the men a new citizen's entrance into the world and his care during the first few days of his life. Hence the following details were not personally observed, but were given to me by women. I gladly admit that greater completeness would have been possible, but probably nothing important is missing in the following lines, except perhaps one or another minor detail that they did not wish to mention to me because of a natural feeling of delicacy. In any case, nothing has changed in modern times in the treatment of infants. Only the pieces of fur formerly used as covers are now replaced by European rags which have very much increased the lack of cleanliness in the child's sleeping place.

854 A European would superficially describe many of their customs as unhygienic and senseless, but on closer observation he might recognize a great deal of purposefulness and empirical wisdom. Travelers of former times saw the tender, solicitous care of Fuegian children by adults so clearly and in such vivid detail that they did not hide their astonishment. Their observations correspond exactly with what everyone can still find today. Therefore, no one should be surprised if all the details in the following account seem brightly and kindly illuminated by the warm glow of genuine parental love for the always welcome child.

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3. My Own Conclusions

111 114 It was anything but encouraging at the start of my journeys to be faced with the strange fact that all the visitors to Tierra del Fuego, as well as all the missionaries without exception, denied with emphatic, unequivocal words that our Indians had any kind of religious view and practice. Everyone regarded the Yamana as irreligious. On my first and second visit, therefore, I consciously avoided touching upon this subject in my conversation with the members of the Lawrence family and in my contact with the Indians. Besides, there were other, more immediate problems which first had to be solved.

124 113 116 The traveling investigator must be favored by fortune; otherwise his efforts are in vain. I obtained the first indications of the religious ideas of the Yamana quite incidentally and without my doing anything. One evening on my second journey I was again sitting with a group of several men who were explaining to me the ancient traditions of their tribe. It was then that I learned for the first time about their myth of a great flood which, in hoary antiquity, had inundated their present homeland. All of us who had listened with obvious seriousness to the old storyteller were silent for some time and thought about the catastrophe of that flood. Afterward one or two men made some short explanatory remarks. I now bravely ventured to ask:"Whoever sent that big flood?" Everyone present instantly became quiet and a painful silence followed. Embarrassed, they lowered their eyes and avoided my gaze so that they would not be forced to answer me. I repeated my question and in a friendly way asked for the desired explanation. Old Alfredo who had done the talking that evening replied /1041/ emphatically: "Lẽxuwakípa sent that tremendous flood." When he did not add anything more, I asked: "Is Lẽxuwakípa really so mighty?" Alfredo replied: "As a matter of fact it was strong Wataųinẽíwa who sent the general flood. Lẽxuwakípa prevailed upon him to do it; it was her intention to demolish the whole world. With Wataųinẽíwa she succeeded in having the great flood come!" Naturally I asked again: "Who is this Wataųinẽíwa?" This very obviously increased the general embarrassment and everyone present maintained strict silence. I felt as though I had been guilty of an impropriety or had ventured on dangerous ground.

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124 After a good long time and probably also in order to break the
113 general silence, Chris boldly said: "Wataŋinēiwa is [similar to]
116 what God is to Christians [Europeans]." His brief words were spoken in a tone which made it clear to me that further questions would not be in order. The attitude of all the men was clearly aloof. Some of them had an expression suggesting that in this discussion some information had heedlessly slipped out which should have remained secret. After that the men timidly exchanged a few words and the gathering soon broke up.

On the next evening I dared not ask about Wataŋinēiwa again; I suspected that the people would misunderstand. It was partly caution and partly disappointment that made me think the missionaries had told these Indians the Biblical account of the flood, but that they had not completely understood it. Hence I entered the following remark in my diary: "Probably Christian influence by the missionaries" and marked the whole paragraph with a question mark.

123 A week later the secret gathering of the čiẽxaus began, in
116 which I was able to participate in March, 1920 (p. 176 /untranslated/). At that time I was treated as strictly as the Indian uswãala and was not allowed to ask questions or to take notes. I remember clearly that at this initiation the names Wataŋinēiwa and Hidãbuan were repeatedly used, but I was fully aware of what they meant only two years later when those names were again recalled to my memory. Although I did not grasp the fact on that occasion, I had actually discovered the Supreme Being whom the Yamana worship. I had finally come close to their religious faith.

123 On my third visit at the end of January, 1922, the men were not yet free for the planned čiẽxaus celebration (p. 184 /untranslated/). In order to spend the time profitably, W. Koppers, who accompanied me at that time (p. 181 /untranslated/), and I did a good deal of research during the day with the Indian women. Nelly Lawrence was regularly and gladly present and thanks to her personal stimulation the women willingly answered our questions. We all wanted to be undisturbed, and so we assembled daily in the shed, a spacious corrugated tin house in which the /1042/ Lawrence family had major housework performed, laundry, for example. This house stood apart from the small dwellings of the Yamana families.

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124 776 Again one day old traditions were discussed, and the name Watauinẽ́iwa was directly mentioned. Full of suspense we pressed for a further explanation. This caused great embarrassment among the women and there was deep silence; not even the otherwise brave Nelly ventured a word. Finally, in order to ease the constraint, old Mary summoned up her courage and said briefly: "Watauinẽ́iwa is like God, like Christian God /cited in English/!" I was nonplused and again faced the same barrier that I had experienced two years before, apparently on the threshold of a new world of ideas to which the Indians refused admittance. Importunate questions on that afternoon would have been futile and would surely have evoked ill humor. Mary only disclosed that upon the death of an own child or a near relative, the neighbors point to [761] the mourner with the expression: "Watauinẽ́iwa is punishing him!" This means that the deceased and his family have been punished by Watauinẽ́iwa through this death.

After a long pause the Indian women attempted a digression. I could not accept this and ventured cautiously to come back to that anxiously guarded name. My efforts remained unsuccessful. The whole conversation flagged and our discussion simply could not get started again. In order to satisfy us and put us off once and for all, the women finally started to tell about ẽkẽtẽ́makalo-watauinẽ́iwa. How craftily they had chosen this way out of their embarrassment! We surrendered our hope of finally finding out more about the real Watauinẽ́iwa. Actually they only offered us the [773] story of the small band of people who, in olden times, had set out for ẽkẽtẽ́maka, where there was stranded whale, and afterwards they remained in that region west of Ushuaia. In this combination the designation watauinẽ́iwa has nothing to do with the name for the Fuegian deity. The crafty Indian women in this way slipped out of the trap and very smartly duped us without betraying their secret. In any case it was now clear that all kinds of things worth knowing were concealed behind that name, and to discover them would probably justify serious effort.

Several times Nelly Lawrence had willingly helped me obtain information I sought in my research on the institutions and customs of her countrymen, and this time, too, she did not fail me. As I definitely learned later, she valued the native heritage of religious ideas extraordinarily highly, and inasmuch as she

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•124 assumed that I was of the same mind, she worked toward making it accessible to me. Three days after the discussion described above, on Wednesday, January 25, 1922, /1043/ she again invited us to the large workshed, with the enticing prospect: "Today Adelheid and I shall tell you everything about Watauinẽiwa!" Nelly explained candidly why these two women were the only ones who came: "Watauinẽiwa has punished neither of us, he has not let a single one of our children die, so we are not ashamed to have him mentioned in our presence. We may freely speak of him [in front of others also]. The other women, however, whose children he took away [through death which he caused], feel that they have been punished by him; they find it unpleasant if he [Watauinẽiwa] is mentioned in their presence!" These very significant words contain a complete explanation of the strange behavior of the people when I asked about Watauinẽiwa (9).

> 9. It is conceivable that this also explains the Yamana's cautious silence in the presence of earlier travelers. Some of them probably noticed this, for example, even Darwin (p. 102 /untranslated/); they were not aware of the ultimate and most profound reason, however.

Whenever I had questioned them, there were always a few persons present in their circle who were obliged to lament the loss of a close relative. It would have been the equivalent of pillorying them if the others present had spoken in detail about Watauinẽiwa in my presence. Considerately, Nelly came only with Adelheid, for these two could describe Watauinẽiwa, what he is and how he acts, freely and without embarrassment. On that Wednesday we learned most of the names which are given him, as well as a few definite prayers directed toward him.

Obviously, that discussion did not exhaust the subject and bring to light all that the Yamana carry within their hearts in the way of ideas about their Supreme Being. I realized that the rest could be obtained only through a wise procedure, and our course lay outlined in the explanation that Nelly had just given us. After that the other people probably learned that we were familiar with their conceptions of the person and actions of Watauinẽiwa. When

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776 I subsequently directed the conversation toward their Supreme
•124 Being on suitable occasions, I did it very considerately and with sympathetic understanding for the depressed feeling of a person who is reminded of one or several deceased persons who were dear to him whenever the name of Watauinéiwa is mentioned. This gentle manner, which was shown intentionally to avoid hurting anyone, was not only comforting to all the Yamana, but steadily diminished their aversion to brief discussions about that feared spirit. In the course of time the discussions gradually became more open and free, and finally, despite a respectful attitude, were almost completely without restraint. Our own attitude toward the ideas sacred to them also helped; we neither criticized nor made fun of them; rather, we valued them highly and treated them with the same respect that they themselves showed. /1044/ Even earlier I had repeatedly heard their comparison: "Christians speak scornfully of their god, revile him and even reject him. No Yamana speaks of our Watauinéiwa in this way!" It was obviously consoling to them that we, too, showed veneration toward him. Some of the Fuegians, however, continued to be reticent whenever Watauinéiwa was mentioned. Although this was always done with genteel reserve, nevertheless it seemed incredible to many of them that something which they themselves revere as sacred could be the same to us.

On that third journey I was permitted to experience the youth initiation a second time (p. 185 /untranslated/), where I heard new references to Watauinéiwa, which were in accordance with the ancient program for the čiéxaus (p.759). Finally on my fourth visit (p. 190 /untranslated/) I was offered an extraordinarily valuable addition to what I had previously learned with regard to a ceremony for the dead. Thus, several times, through none of my doing and quite suddenly, I came upon religious utterances of the Yamana. It was primarily for this that I sought uninterrupted and open discussions with all the older people. By doing so, I could bring to light what I have put together in the following pages. I know of no reason why they should have concealed anything from me.

114 There is no longer any lack of convincing explanations as to why these Fuegians have so anxiously guarded their heritage of

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776 A complete picture of the Supreme Being as it exists in the imagination of the Yamana must show his absolutely independent position with regard to all the other spirits and human souls. In none of the many myths that I collected is he included in any way; in fact, there is a wide gap between him and all the mythological personalities and the so-called kĭna spirits. It has been shown on page 765 to what extent he is linked with the Tánuwa spirit in the čiéxaus. He is not viewed as sharing the conditions of existence which the Yamana regard as vital, such as being married. On
776 one occasion, with studied carelessness, as though it were an
●124 everyday matter, I asked a few people: "To whom, I wonder, is Watauinéiwa married?" In response an expression appeared on their faces, showing what, in their view, a very stupid, gauche utterance deserves. Nelly Lawrence seemed disconcerted, and long seconds passed before she regained her composure after the impact of that strange question. This time, too, as in all her other statements, she wanted to be accurate, and she assured me innocently: "That is something I never heard about! I'll ask the old people whether they perhaps know something!" She was already fully convinced that anything like it was utterly unknown to the old people also; that is why she never came back to the subject. Soon afterward, when Chris alone was asked this question, he replied indignantly: "Who in the world maintained that!" Calming him, we explained: "As a matter of fact no one maintained anything like that; we just wanted to ask!" He then fell silent and showed pity for Europeans who confused themselves with such useless questions. The Yamana have no conception whatever of how Watauinéiwa actually lives -- that is to say, his dwelling, food, weariness, sleep, etc. -- and they have nothing to say on the subject. They definitely know that he has a very unique manner of existence; this is enough for them and they have no desire to find out about details.

776 All the characteristics attributed to Watauinéiwa add up to quite a richly endowed personality, despite the simplicity of the picture. He has a wholly independent position above all creation, as well as separate from other spirit-beings and from human beings. His intervention in the destinies of the inhabitants of the earth, and thus his activity in general, is revealed in the association

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113 The material in the following pages probably constitutes the entire treasure of myths that has been at the disposal of our Fuegians since ancient times. In gathering it, I was remarkably favored by fortune on my second journey (p. 178 /untranslated/). Although it is not customary among our Fuegians for a woman in a mixed gathering to relate long episodes from her own experiences or from a myth, nevertheless some Fuegian women faithfully preserve much legendary material in their memories, and very willingly offer it at an occasional gathering of female friends and neighbors. It seems to me that vainglory and the desire to shine in front of others by relating one's own deeds and remarkable experiences is far less developed in women than in men and that it is therefore easier for a woman storyteller, without much digression, to adhere logically to the main point of the myth. For most of the stories current among the Yamana I am indebted to the mentally alert Julia, the wife of old Alfredo, who is unanimously regarded by her countrymen as the one best informed about them. I learned from her for days (p. 178 /untranslated/). Further material that I gathered on my third and fourth journey was made up of supplementary explanations and unimportant details. Many a myth was also repeated to me by other persons. Thus I believe that I have gathered all the mythological material that the Yamana have preserved from hoary antiquity down to the present day.

a. The Origin of the World

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153 The mentality and the way of thinking of our Fuegians have been only cursorily described above. Nevertheless, from what has been said, no European will expect much from them in the way of a clear conception of the origin of the world or a well-ordered picture of the universe. Actually they have only individual short trains of thought which can be neither consistently combined nor linked together without gaps. What may have happened at the beginning of everything visible is much too distant to merit special attention by our Fuegians, who are creatures of the moment, so to speak, for whom the given